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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 08/14/09

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ARTICLES:

- (1) Japan should pursue nuclear disarmament without impairing deterrence capability

MAINICHI (Page 10) (Full)
August 14, 2009

By Matake Kamiya, professor at National Defense Academy

Stimulated by U.S. President Barack Obama's speech in Prague this April outlining his vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, moves for nuclear disarmament are gaining momentum across the world. Eliminating nuclear weapons is Japan's long-felt wish. How should Japan face this new situation? The Obama vision is evaluated as "practical," but it is essential to correctly understand its meaning.

In the Prague speech, Obama said that as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the U.S. has a moral responsibility to act. But he also said that since it will take time to eliminate all nuclear weapons, the goal is unlikely to be attained in his lifetime. He further said that America will maintain necessary nuclear weapons to deter attacks from enemies against it and its allies as long as nuclear weapons exist in the world.

Obama indicated that the U.S. will seriously pursue the ideal of nuclear abolition in the future but will not sacrifice security for the sake of the ideal. In short, he says that he will rely on the role of nuclear weapons for global peace and security until all nuclear weapons are removed from the world.

In Japan, people seem to be paying attention only to the unprecedented advocacy of nuclear abolition by the president of the U.S., the world's largest nuclear power, but seem not to comprehend Obama's entire vision. Obama has warned that although the threat of global-scale warfare has reduced, the fear of a nuclear attack is growing with nuclear proliferation. We should be aware that such a

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trend is particularly remarkable in Northeast Asia, which includes Japan.

To respond to the Obama concept, Japan should pursue both the ideal of nuclear disarmament and the reality of security.

Japan has long nursed a variety of ideas for nuclear disarmament. Japan should now once again propagate those ideas globally and take the initiative in creating feasible measures.

If Japan continues to opt for a nonnuclear policy despite North Korea's nuclear tests and China's modernized nuclear capability, that stance alone will greatly contribute to the world's pursuit of the ideal of the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Japan possesses no nuclear weapons in a world of heightened danger from nuclear attack. Japan also needs to mull how to ensure its security. The key lies in the U.S.'s nuclear umbrella.

Nonnuclear powers must not fail to prepare as long as there are nuclear powers. The U.S.'s nuclear umbrella has offered reassurance to many nonnuclear powers, including Japan. Obama's reference in the Prague speech to the U.S. capability to deter enemies from attacks against its allies was made in consideration of this point. Although nuclear disarmament is important, it is quite natural for the Japanese and American governments to judge that the credibility of the U.S. umbrella must not be undermined.

Japan should declare, as President Obama did, that it has no intention to jeopardize its security by exposure to a real threat for the sake of an ideal. Even so, Japan should consider together with the U.S. the question of to what extent nuclear weapons can be reduced while maintaining the credibility of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, as well as the possibility of replacing the nuclear umbrella with U.S.'s conventional weapons. While making such efforts, Japan should try to explore a constructive approach.

(2) 2009 Lower House election: Focus already on how to treat Ozawa

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts)
August 14, 2009

In the Democratic Party of Japan, the focus is already on how to treat Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa if the DPJ takes over the reins

of government. If the DPJ wins the upcoming House of Representatives election, it is certain that the presence of Ozawa, who has been guiding the election, will further strengthen in the party. Therefore, some DPJ members are concerned about a possible dual power structure of Ozawa and a Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama.

Ozawa has been busy finding candidates for districts in which the LDP has not fielded any candidates, as well as with stumping in local areas.

It is taken in the LDP that his election strategy, which includes filing new female candidates against seasoned Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) candidates is gradually working. Ozawa has fielded one female candidate against former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori in the No. 2 district in Ishikawa Prefecture, and another candidate against former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki in the No. 1 district in Ehime Prefecture.

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Many of those candidates if elected will come under the influence of Ozawa. This means the birth of the "Ozawa children."

In May, Ozawa was forced to quit the LDP presidency due to his secretary's receiving illegal donations from Nishimatsu Construction Co. However, Ozawa's aides believe that if the DPJ wins the general election, it means that he will be absolved from the charges.

At a press conference on July 27, Ozawa expressed his willingness to continue taking charge of elections, saying: "At the time when we win the general election, I will start working for the next House of Councillors election."

A member of a group supporting Ozawa said: "He should serve as secretary or deputy prime minister without portfolio. I want him to make efforts to fight against the bureaucracy."

However, a group of members who have distanced themselves from Ozawa is growing alarmed, worrying about his recovery of power

(3) Interview with former Lower House speaker Kono at the end of his political career

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Excerpts)
August 14, 2009

Yohei Kono (72), now a former Lower House speaker, has ended his over 42 years of career as a lawmaker. He has been a representative of the dovish faction in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). He served as a Lower House speaker for 2,029 days, the longest in the history of constitutional politics. On the eve of the anniversary of the end of the war, Tokyo Shimbun asked him about his impressions of what the Diet should do, and his thoughts about the elimination of nuclear arms .

Nuclear disarmament is global trend

-- U.S. President Obama in a speech in April in Prague pledged to seek a world free of nuclear weapons.

"The global trend is changing. Voices calling for nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear arms are unprecedentedly growing in Japan, as well. We must act in response to these calls and play a proactive role for nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear arms."

-- Do you intend to continue activities for the elimination of nuclear arms after stepping down as a politician?

"I think I will, although I do not know what role I can fulfill in what situations. I would like to talk with people in various positions.

-- Former Air Self-Defense Chief of Staff Toshio Tamogami is insisting on the need for Japan to go nuclear.

"It is outrageous. Those connected to the Defense Ministry must be more modest."

-- Some circles are lionizing nuclear armament.

"Will that work favorably to relations between Japan and Asia? Some

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say that doves will become extinct. I am not so pessimistic. Changes in the global trend will affect Japanese people. When that happens, expectations of doves will rise. I will do my best until such a time comes."

(4) Bumpy road for "third force" politicians in Lower House election

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts)

August 14, 2009

Independent candidate Takeo Hiranuma, a former minister of economy, trade, and industry, left the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in 2005 due to his opposition to postal privatization. He has persisted in being a "proud independent" and will be participating in the House of Representatives election at the head of the "Hiranuma Group" consisting of 17 former Lower House members. The aftereffects of the cerebral infarction he suffered in 2006 have disappeared almost completely, and it is said that he can now make four 1-hour speeches in a day.

Hiranuma is aiming at winning at least five seats and pushing for a situation where neither the ruling nor the opposition parties control a majority. He wants to form a "robust conservative force" drawing members from both the LDP and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in order to hold the casting vote as a "third force."

Hiranuma talked about his post-election scenario when he campaigned for his junior peer, the LDP's Shoichi Nakagawa (former minister of finance and financial services) at the latter's constituency in Obihiro City, Hokkaido, on July 5: "I would like to join forces with Mr. Nakagawa to create a trend toward good politics in Japan."

The DPJ has been trying to woo Hiranuma. When Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa was party president, he used to play golf and dine with Hiranuma. DPJ supreme adviser Kozo Watanabe appeared on a TV program with Hiranuma on July 25 and asked the ex-minister to form a cabinet together with him.

However, about two weeks later, on August 10, Ozawa held a news conference in Okayama City to announce that lawyer Keito Nishimura was an official candidate for the DPJ. This amounted to a cutoff of relations with Hiranuma, who had not expressed his willingness to cooperate with the party.

"Your Party" leader Yoshimi Watanabe declared before some 300 local supporters at an assembly hall in Otaru City, Tochigi Prefecture, in the afternoon of August 11: "We have deliberately gathered under the banners of breaking away from bureaucrats, local autonomy, and emphasis on livelihood" and sought supporters' understanding for forming a new party. Watanabe left the LDP in January with the aim of realigning the political forces. He has a solid base of political support, which he inherited from his father, Michio Watanabe, a former deputy prime minister and finance minister. The LDP has already decided not to field a candidate against him, while the DPJ is also taking a wait-and-see attitude.

However, the DPJ, which is now confident of capturing political power single-handedly, is beginning to shift from an attitude of deference to Watanabe to one of checking him. At his news conference on August 10 to announce Hiranuma's rival candidate, Ozawa stated with a chuckle, "Mr. Watanabe is not taking a clear stand on

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replacing the LDP-New Komeito administration. We may decide to field an official candidate."

"Our policy direction is similar to the DPJ's," Watanabe emphasized in his speech at the Foreign Correspondents' Club on August 13. "Forming a post-election coalition is possible." He has been lamenting to his aides recently that "if the DPJ wins too many seats, we won't have a role to play."

(5) Agricultural policy: DPJ to start income subsidies for farming households from FY11; LDP to increase income by full utilization of paddy fields

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 7) (Full)
August 14, 2009

Tomotaka Hayashi

There is strong interest in agricultural policy due to the debate over reviewing the rice production adjustment (gentan) policy. Both parties are campaigning vigorously to win support. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is advocating once again the creation of a system of income subsidies for farming households, which was instrumental for its victory in the House of Councilors election two years ago, while the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) pledges to increase farmers' income. We looked into the background of their agricultural policies, which have often been ridiculed as a "battle of pork barrels."

Q: What is the state of agriculture in Japan?

A: Sixty percent of farmers are 65 years old or older and few have successors. Total farmland has decreased to three-fourths of its peak, and farmland left untilled is equivalent in area to Saitama Prefecture. Over the past 10 years the food self-sufficiency rate has remained at the 40 percent level, which is the lowest among the industrialized countries. There is no lack of issues relating to agriculture.

Q: Why has this happened?

A: Simply put, this situation arose because farming does not make money. Income from agriculture shrank by 50 percent between 1992 and 2006. Retailers have become more powerful, so the increase in cost of oil or fertilizers has not been reflected in the prices of agricultural products. Furthermore, little progress has been made in enlarging the size of farms, which is necessary for cost cutting. Many farmers earn less than they spend on production.

Q: What is the system of income subsidies for farming households proposed by the DPJ?

A: It is a mechanism by which the government makes up for the difference between product cost and selling price. The DPJ's manifesto (campaign pledges) calls for introducing the system in FY11. As a first step, income subsidies will be paid for rice, wheat, soybean, and other high-cost crops requiring extensive land use. In the future, the system will also be applied to livestock products, as well as to workers in the timber and fishing industries.

Q: What is the LDP's thinking on this?

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A: Its manifesto says it will "strengthen domestic agricultural production and increase farmers' income," but the document does not contain concrete plans or numerical targets. Overall, its proposals read like a continuation of the present policy of doling out generous subsidies to secure farmers' income. The manifesto has shifted from the existing policy of emphasizing farms of a certain size to "abolishing the land area and age requirements."

Q: What is the policy of the two parties on gentan?

A: On the assumption of maintaining the gentan policy, the LDP will continue to advocate "full utilization of rice paddies" to allow not only cultivation of wheat and soybean but also rice used for rice

flour and fodder in addition to rice as a staple food. The DPJ advocates an "optional system," in which only farming households that choose to meet numerical production targets receive income subsidies.

Q: Both parties appear to be generous to farmers, but is this not unfair from the standpoint of non-farmers?

A: Japan cannot compete with Australia or the U.S., where low-cost production using wide tracts of land is possible, in price no matter how hard farmers work to manage their farms. On the other hand, relying on imports for agricultural products becomes a security issue. If the paddies are neglected, they also become an environmental issue because, for example, flooding will occur more easily. Support for agriculture is meant to compensate for these multifaceted functions. This thinking is common not only to the two parties, but to all political parties.

Q: What is the impact of this on World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations and trade policy?

A: The conclusion of an agreement in WTO negotiations will have a serious impact on rice and other crops currently protected by high import tariffs. However, none of the parties' manifestos offers ways to cope with the WTO agreement. The DPJ has revised its manifesto to read "promote negotiations" for, rather than "conclude," a free trade agreement.

(6) Head of agricultural cooperatives' political arm calls for firm resistance to FTA with U.S.

ASAHI (Page 7) (Full)
August 14, 2009

The conflict between the JA Group and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has intensified as the general election approaches. The group, which employs 2.6 million people and has a membership of 5 million, is the biggest supporter of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). How does it plan to engage in dialogue with the DPJ in the future? We interviewed Koichi Kawaida, head of JA's political arm, the National Federation of Farmers' Organizations for Agricultural Administration Movement (Zenku Nogyosha Nosei Undo Soshiki Renmei or Zenkoku Noseiren).

Q: You have issued a statement opposing the conclusion of a free trade agreement (FTA) with the U.S., which is included in the DPJ's manifesto. However, the DPJ has revised this to "promoting negotiations" for an FTA.

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Kawaida: Agriculture will be ruined by the conclusion of an FTA. An FTA is absolutely unacceptable for me as a representative of farmers. Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa indicated on August 8 that Japan should aim to conclude an FTA. His statement is different from a personal opinion expressed by a Diet member. We will not be deceived.

Q: Don't you think an emotional conflict will linger between you and the DPJ?

Kawaida: We don't want to fight before an election. However, if the DPJ talks about concluding an FTA or breaking up agricultural cooperatives, we will have to ask, What do you mean?

Q: The DPJ claims that JA should be politically neutral.

Kawaida: Superficial "political neutrality" will not help protect agriculture. In agriculture there are factors beyond human control, such as poor harvests and natural disasters. Based on the thinking that when something happens, the government should take care of farmers, we have maintained our connection with the ruling party since World War II. Because the LDP holds power in the current administration, it is natural for us to support the LDP.

Q: You decided in spring that the JA will field candidates in the

House of Councilors election of July 2010. Will you have your candidates recognized as official LDP candidates regardless of the outcome of the Lower House election?

Kawaida: That is our plan at present. However, if a change of administration takes place, the JA Group will conduct internal deliberations on how to deal with it. In principle, candidates will come from the JA Group. Several parties, including the LDP, had approached four or five of our people, but we declined politely. Since the election is fast approaching, I'd rather not talk about this subject anymore.

Q: Some regions have stopped their one-sided support for the LDP. The Aomori Noseiren, for instance, is allowing its members to vote freely.

Kawaida: I heard that there are (JA members) who are DPJ members or chapter heads. I think it is up to an individual's judgment. However, we are unanimous in resolutely resisting the FTA.

Q: Do you think changes of administration will take place frequently from now on?

Kawaida: That's probably going to be the case. JA will just have to deal with politics on a case-by-case basis to achieve its goal of protecting farmers. We have supported the LDP for 60 years, and perhaps we have sometimes given it too much support.

Q: What do you think of the DPJ's policies?

Kawaida: I am not clear about them yet. I wonder where the funding for income subsidies for farming households will come from. Other groups may complain. However, if the DPJ's policies will enable farmers to make ends meet, then I have no objection to them.

Q: Don't you think you need to hold a constructive dialogue with the

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DPJ?

Kawaida: For sure, a constructive dialogue is necessary -- that is, if they actually take over the reins of government.

(Interviewer: Kenji Oyamada)

(7) FRB estimate that U.S. economy is about to bottom out is reasonable, according to four economists: Concern about stimulus policy effects running out in Japan

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 7) (Full)
August 14, 2009

Since the Federal Reserve Board (FRB) on August 12 released a statement saying that economic activities in the U.S. are beginning to bottom out, the U.S. economy has entered a phase of looking for a chance to start picking up. The pace of recovery will likely be moderate, as the jobless rate is still expected to rise. The future of the Japanese economy will become unclear once the round of stimulus measures has run its course. Tokyo Shimbun asked four economists about their outlooks for the Japanese and U.S. economies. They are concerned about the downside risk factors for both economies.

All four economists agree that the upward revision of the FRB's economic outlook this time is appropriate. This is because favorable factors, such as the effects of subsidies for automobile trade-ins and the halting of the downturn of the housing sector, are present.

However, barriers against an economic pickup are high. As a disturbing factor, all four economists cite that adjustments to excessive spending financed by loans have not ended yet. Taro Saito at the NLI Research Institute says that the U.S. economy will not be able to regain its strength, which once served as a driving force for the global economy.

Yoshiki Shinke of the Dai-Ichi Life Research Institute estimated

that the rate of a decline in the jobless rate has shrunk, but it will once again rise to 10 percent. Mitsumaru Kumagai at the Daiwa Institute of Research is concerned about a rise in long-term interest rates stemming from the fiscal deficit. Takahide Kiuchi at the Nomura Securities Financial and Economic Research Center views: "The U.S. financial market is unstable. It will take about three times longer than past cases to recover. Full-fledged economic recovery will not take place before the middle of next year."

It is hard to devise a scenario for the Japanese economy, which is dependent on foreign demand, turning around, unless the U.S. economy recovers smoothly. The effects of stimulus measures are propping up the domestic economy. However, the future of the economy is unclear due to the worsening employment situation. Shinke pointed out, "The rate of a decline in capital spending is shrinking. Capital spending will be basically smooth this fiscal year." Kumagai also took a forward-looking stance, estimating, "Economic recovery will continue due to the effects of policies implemented, consumption, and recovery seen in some industry areas." Both indicated the view that there are downside risk factors to the future.

Kiuchi, in the meantime, predicted: "Stimulus measures are cashing in on future demand. Their effects are now beginning to run out. Employment adjustments by companies will now target permanent

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workers. The economy will return to the negative territory in the January-March quarter next year."

Since recovery in exports and industrial output has not yet led to final demand, Saito took a harsh view: "Domestic demand will be weak. Capital spending will also be sluggish. The effects of stimulus measures will continue until year's end. However, the economy will decline again next year."

Economic growth outlook by economists

Economic growth projection (%)
July-Sept quarter Oct-Dec quarter Comment
Takahide Kiuchi

Nomura Securities Financial and Economic Research Center Economic Research Department manager

Japan 2.8
U.S. about 3

Japan 0.4
U.S. 1.8 Though the U.S. economy is now in good shape due to response to the sharp decline and the effects of implemented policies, full-fledged recovery will not take place until after the middle of next year. The Japanese economy could hit a second bottom.

Yoshiki Shinke

Dai-Ichi Life Research Institute chief economist

Japan 2.8
U.S. 2.9

Japan 3.5
U.S. 2.5 The U.S. housing sector will show signs of stopping its decline. Japans' exports will grow steadily before the end of this fiscal year.
Mitsumaru Kumagai

Daiwa Institute of Research senior economist

Japan 1.0
U.S. 2.5

Japan 1.1
U.S. 1.9 Economic recovery is now a global trend. The economy has climbed out of the worst phase. In the meantime, there are still downside risk factors in both the Japanese and U.S. economies.

Taro Saito

NLI Research Institute chief researcher

Japan 3.7
U.S. 1.3

Japan 1.2

U.S. 1.1 The U.S. economy will soon hit bottom, but it will have no power to serve as a driving force for the global economy. Stimulus measures have produced results promptly in Japan. However, domestic demand is weak.

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(8)Editorial: Bluefin tuna trade embargo - How can we continue to enjoy tuna?

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 5) (Full)
August 14, 2009

The United States and Europe intend to propose a blanket trade ban on bluefin tuna at a conference next March of the Contracting Parties to the Washington Convention to restrict trade of threatened species. Since Japan consumes about 80 percent of the fish catches, it should take action.

Japanese people are very fond of tuna, but there are few Japanese who care about where and how tuna is caught and brought to our dinner tables.

It was in the second half of the 1990s, when the belly of tuna with a high fat content (Otoro), which used to be very expensive, began to be served at conveyor-belt sushi bars at low prices. The reason is because Mediterranean countries began to export to Japan an enormous volume of tuna that was fattened up through fish farming.

Fish farming, which is similar to "buying rice before the harvest," accelerated a decrease in the amount of tuna. It is also believed that a global increase in fish consumption will fuel the depletion of the resource.

Since it is difficult for just one country to manage tuna, which is a migratory fish, five regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) that were formed by countries concerned manage tuna. One of the RFMOs, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) decided last fall on a broad reduction of fishing quotas, but there is no end to the poaching of tuna for the fish farming, the under-declaration of fish catches, and illegal fishing operations due to the organization's weak penalties. Therefore, assessments of the RFMO system are low.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has backed moves to totally ban the trade of tuna, warning that Mediterranean tuna is faced with the threat of extinction. If the total embargo is approved by a two-thirds vote, not only exports and imports but also deep-sea fishing will be impossible.

The Japanese government hosted a joint conference of the RFMOs the year last in Kobe City and the conference adopted an action plan to recover tuna. This means that the government has taken a positive stance toward strengthening regular restrictions. Mitsubishi Corporation last September released a statement that said: "Unless the continuity of tuna is secured, we will review our involvement in the tuna business." In order to protect the "tuna culture" by evading the trade embargo, the Japanese government has no other choice but to present concrete measures while expressing its determination to manage the resource prior to the ICCA annual meeting in November. Using "marine eco-labels" authorized by Britain's Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an effective way to give consideration to an ecosystem.

Obtaining consumers' understanding is also indispensable. In a bid to prevent consumers from involuntarily supporting the poaching and extinction of tuna, the government should undersatnd the actual situation of food distribution while paying attention to the label

indicating the place of origin. The government also should review consumer behavior.

(9) TOP HEADLINES

Asahi:

Transport Minister played key role in helping local construction companies receive orders for highway expansion projects

Mainichi:

Health Ministry amends medical center improvement guidelines to require prenatal care hospitals to provide emergency treatment for mothers

Yomiuri:

141 municipalities grant inappropriate pay raises: 3.3 billion yen paid to 9,200 officials

Nikkei:

Isetan Mitsukoshi to open five more department stores in China as pillar of overseas operations

Sankei:

DPJ to build national memorial for war dead, after launching administration; plans for advisory panel

Tokyo Shimbun:

Actual jobless rate tops 9%?: LDP to focus on expanding safety net; DPJ to protect workers first

Akahata:

JCP's comprehensive assistance measures will strive for change from basic problems

(10) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

(1) 2009 general election: Start new industrial revolution in mature Japan; Create mechanism for sharing growth markets in Asia

Mainichi:

(1) 2009 Lower House election: Political reform; Politicians are too easy on themselves

(2) Viewpoint: Lower House election; Postal privatization - Dealing with the aftermath of the frenzy is tough; by editorial writer Eietsu Imamatsu

Yomiuri:

(1) Pension reform: Go beyond partisan opposition and search for common ground

(2) U.S. financial policy: FRB exploring exit strategy

Nikkei:

(1) 2009 Lower House election: Question policies; Proposal for making highways toll-free is full of problems

(2) U.S. economy's resilience still weak

Sankei:

(1) Politics and money: Will Ozawa and Hatoyama of DPJ continue to ignore money scandals?

(2) Obon festival - time to offer prayers for ancestors; Opportunity to think about taking over as head of the family

Tokyo Shimbun:

(1) 2009 Lower House election: Resource policy that will promote growth urged

(2) Bluefin tuna trade embargo: How can we continue to enjoy bluefin tuna forever?

Akahata:

(1) Withdrawal from nuclear umbrella now being brought into question

(11) Prime Minister's schedule, August 13

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
August 14, 2009

08:29

Took a walk on the grounds of the official residential quarters.

10:44

Met former Lower House member Taimei Yamaguchi, chairman of the Saitama Prefectural Chapter, at party headquarters. Afterward he met party employees to provide encouragement.

12:01

Visited Isetan Department Store, Shinjuku.

12:23

Arrived at the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

15:44

Met Chief Cabinet Secretary Kawamura.

18:45

Appeared on a news program at the TBS Broadcasting Center in Akasaka.

19:47

Returned to the official residential quarters.

ZUMWALT